25 January 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: FOLLOW-ON SYSTEM PARAMETERS

1. Period of operation: To cover the period from an initial operational capability in FY-1973 or 1974 continuing on through 1980.

2. Regions of interest: Intelligence coverage of the Soviet Union and possibly China.

25X1 3. Projected environment: [redacted] It is postulated that the period would be sufficiently tense to warrant the provocation of aircraft overflights but not to the state requiring warning/indications reconnaissance as discussed in USIB-D-46.4/3, 5 January 1968.

[redacted] 25X1

25X1 5. Bases of operation: [redacted] It is projected that all bases of operation would be within the U.S. possessions (including Hawaii, Guam, Alaska, etc.)

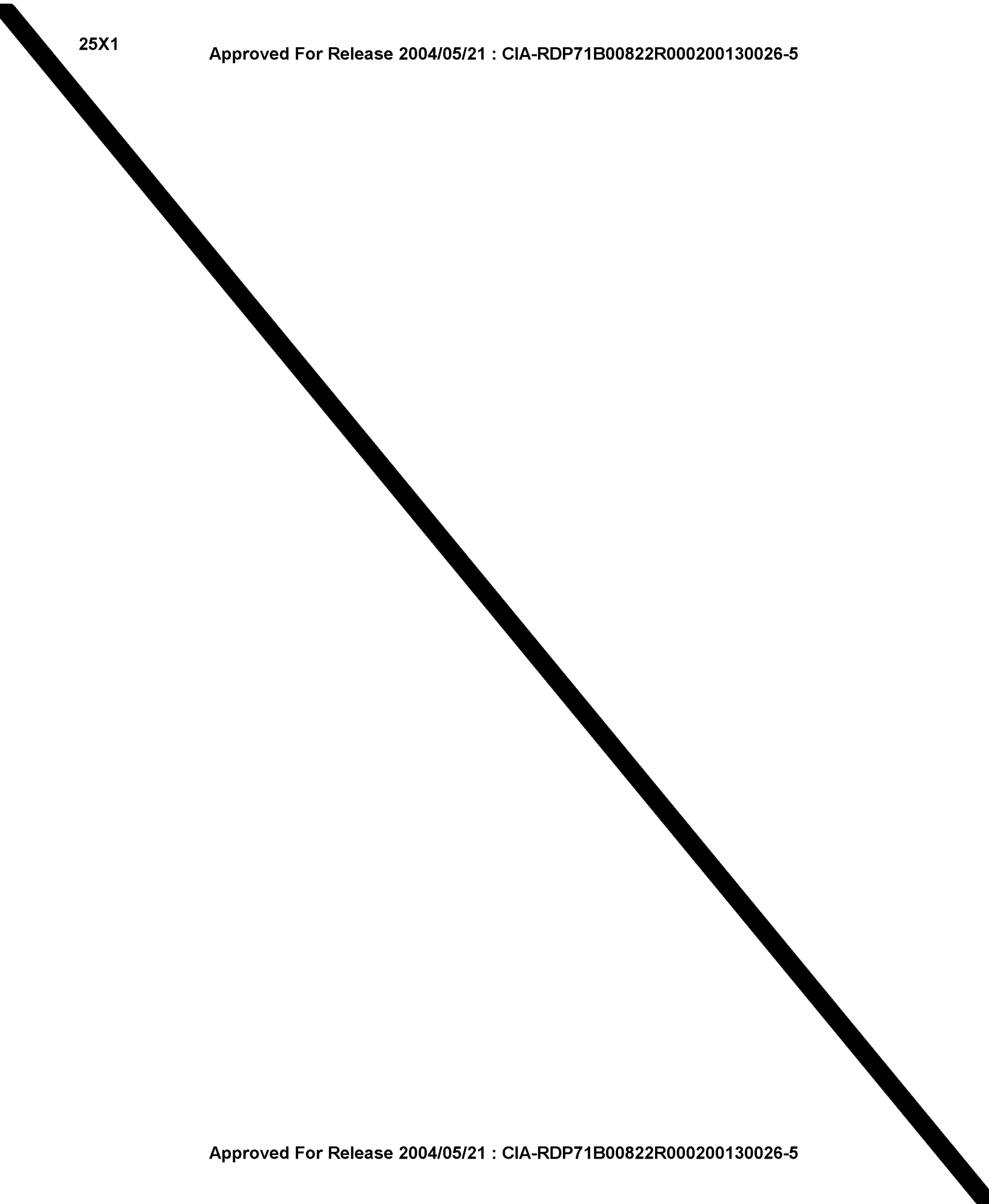
25X1 6. General Comments: [redacted] For this reason any information collected would require physical transport to the decision making elements. With the present acknowledgement of all parties concerned to satellite reconnaissance it is obvious that this is strictly a backup system [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted]

[redacted] 25X1

A(T)D/R&D/OSA

NRO review(s) completed.



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FY 1969 Budget Issue No. 9 - Advanced Aircraft

Discussion: EXCOM

The NRO has in the past had programs of study of the application of advanced aircraft technology to reconnaissance missions. There are several potential concepts for aircraft-like vehicles, but in general, such vehicles tend to represent difficult and significant technical challenges and would be correspondingly expensive to develop. They would in effect be follow-ons to the OXCART. In order to provide an acceptable probability of penetration and survival, these systems tend to operate on the basis of a single pass over the target area and will operate at very high (hypersonic) speed and altitudes and with limited maneuverability. The energy required to boost vehicles to such speeds approaches that of a satellite.

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CIA submitted a recommended FY 69 budget of [redacted] for research and development in connection with an advanced aircraft, including efforts on studies of vehicles, propulsion and high altitude performance; new vehicle design; and cryogenic engine development. The present DNRO budget makes no provision for any of this effort.

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The question arises as to scope and direction of NRP effort in this field, The requirement for intelligence which necessitated such a vehicle must be confirmed, and the cost and effectiveness of alternative vehicular concepts examined: for example, should the vehicle be manned or unmanned (drone) and in each case what type of launch operation, propulsion, recovery, etc., offers the most promise. These coneepts must also be compared with single-pass recoverage orbital satellite vehicles.

The decision to phase-out the OXCART vehicle this year and the CIA decision to discontinue work on the ISINGLASS concept for a hypersonic reconnaissance aircraft represented a trend away from continuing maintenance of a high-performance covert manned overflight capability in the NRP. Here by high-performance is meant not only high vehicle performance but systems performance leading to a capability to penetrate dense air defense ~~ex~~ environments. When the phase-out of the OXCART is completed, such high performance capability will reside only in Air Force SR-71's. The issue then is not only whether and at what rate advanced aircraft or drone-like high-performance reconnaissance capability should be developed, but also whether such development should be conducted as part of the NRP.

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25X1 [redacted] 9 [redacted] 25X1

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